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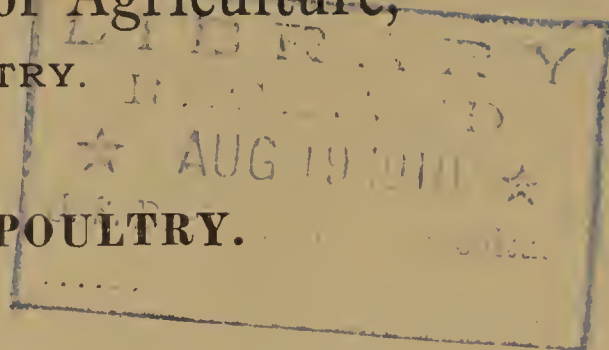
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United States Department of Agriculture,

BUREAU OF CHEMISTRY.

H. W. WILEY, *Chief.*

A KNIFE FOR KILLING POULTRY.

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The knives in common use in bleeding and braining poultry are not suited to their purpose. The blades are too broad and too long and the curve at the point should be on the back instead of on the cutting edge. The handle is so large that the killer is encouraged to use too much force in making the cut to bleed, whereas a light touch of the sharp knife, properly directed, is all that is needed to cut the blood vessels. The knives are also insanitary in that dirt collects at the junction of the blade and handle.

The knife which is to be used to bleed and brain poultry should be small, with a narrow blade; stiff, so that it does not bend; of the best steel, so that it can be kept sharp and is not nicked when used in braining; and the handle and blade should be in one piece. Such a knife, with the aid of the packing-house emery wheel or grindstone and oilstone, can be made from an 8-inch flat file. (See fig. 1, *a*.)

To make this knife the handle of the file should first be ground off. Then the blade should be shaped from the small end of the file, as shown in figure 1, *b*. It should be 2 inches long, one-fourth inch wide, and one-eighth inch thick at the back. The curve to make the point should slope from the back downward. A blade of this shape reaches the blood vessels to be cut more surely than does a blade on which the point curves upward. After the blade is made the ridges on the file should be ground down, leaving just enough roughness to prevent the knife slipping in the hand of the killer. The length of the knife, over all, should be 7 inches.



FIG. 1.—Knife for bleeding and braining poultry: *a*, File from which knife was made; *b*, Knife.

WASHINGTON, D. C., June 22, 1910.

